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Information and Technology

Evaluating Assessments

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Question 1: What are the key characteristics of authentic assessment?

Authentic assessments (also known as performance assessment) involve real-world tasks in which students use higher-order thinking and consider multiple perspectives and solutions to a problem. Students take an active role in constructing meaning and describing their process and results to an audience beyond the classroom. In music, performance assessments are the norm in the form of concerts. But music students can also be given opportunities to arrange/compose, choose music for video, review musical performances or recordings, or teach their instrument to someone else, among many other things. These activities can deepen a students understanding of music and its different applications.

Question 2: How do authentic assessments and traditional tests differ?

Traditional tests are conducted inside the classroom, with the end product seen only by the teacher and the student. They are often closed-ended, “right-answer” assessments. Multiple choice tests, fill in the blank, and short answer tests are all examples of this. Writing a persuasive essay is more of an authentic assessment, especially if that essay is actually used in the real world (mailing a letter to a politician, for example).

Question 3:

Choose an example of an authentic assessment you find online that is appropriate to the subject and grade level you are observing or preparing to teach. **Include the title and URL of the assessment.** **Evaluate the degree to which the assessment incorporates the six criteria of authentic assessment listed above.**

Title: The Melody of Your Dreams

URL: <http://www.k12.wa.us/Arts/PerformanceAssessments/Music/Grade10-MelodyofYourDreams.doc>

Rating Scale: 1-5 (5 being the best)

Criteria 1 (Active learning in which students construct their own understanding of the topic) : 5. Students compose and notate an original melody and then play the melody the composed.

Criteria 2 (Open-ended task with multiple opportunities to arrive at a conclusion) 4. The task is pretty open-ended but it has to be a single line melody with no harmonization or accompaniment. There are several opportunities to revise the composition and practice it, however.

Criteria 3 (Relation of the assessment to the subject content or process) 5. The students are composing and playing music. What more could you ask for?

Criteria 4 (Student communication of learning through in-depth communication, i.e., orally, in writing, or in a product or performance) 4. The student plays their composition but is not required to “pitch it” to the car dealership, explaining why they made the compositional choices they made and why it will put customers in the right mood to buy cars.

Criteria 5 (Sharing of learning by students with an audience beyond the classroom) 2. The student performs in class, and is not required to give a performance for an audience. They are left with an end product that they could show to parents/friends though.

Criteria 6 (Scoring rubric that provides specific criteria by which the student and/or teacher can evaluate the work.) 3 There are 2 categories (Creating and Performing) that list 5 criteria within them. These criteria are not scored separately. If each criteria had its own score, the rubric would be a 5.

**Question 4:** Examine the diagram, Balancing the Two Faces of E-Portfolios. What are the two types of ePortfolios?

The first type is Learning/Reflection, and is meant to be a formative assessment tool that documents the learning process as it unfolds. The second type is Showcase/Accountability, which is meant to be a summative assessment that demonstrates achievement as a final product.  
  
**Question 5:** How are the two types of portfolios created?

Learning/Reflection portfolios are organized chronologically, adding elements periodically. Knowledge portfolios are organized thematically, created after the fact.

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**Question 6:** In what ways are the two portfolios similar?

They both document learning, are reflective, and contain a collection of “artifacts” (documents, sound recordings, artwork, etc).